

This Page Is Inserted by IFW Operations  
and is not a part of the Official Record

## **BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES**

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images may include (but are not limited to):

- BLACK BORDERS
- TEXT CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- FADED TEXT
- ILLEGIBLE TEXT
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- COLORED PHOTOS
- BLACK OR VERY BLACK AND WHITE DARK PHOTOS
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS

**IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.**

**As rescanning documents *will not* correct images,  
please do not report the images to the  
Image Problem Mailbox.**

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1        1.     A game ball comprising:
  - 2            a casing having a laced region; and
  - 3            a lacing coupled to the laced region of the casing, the lacing having an exposed surface comprised of an outer material that is compressible, resilient, and
  - 4            tactile, the outer material having a modulus of elasticity of between 14 and 170 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>
  - 5            and a tensile strength between 100 and 650 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>.
- 1        2.     The game ball of claim 1, wherein the lacing further comprises an inner substrate coupled to an outer layer.
- 1        3.     The game ball of claim 2, wherein the outer layer is attached to the inner substrate using a means selected from the group consisting of adhesive bonding, stitching, stapling, mechanical bonding, heat bonding and combinations thereof.
- 1        4.     The game ball of claim 2, wherein the inner substrate is formed from one or more inner materials selected from the group consisting of a woven cloth, a non-woven cloth, a urethane impregnated cloth, at least one nylon strand, at least one polyester strand, braided fibers, plastic, latex, vinyl, a rope, a wire, a leather strip and a combination thereof.
- 1        5.     The game ball of claim 2 wherein the inner substrate includes at least one strand of a high tensile strength material and a plastic generally surrounding to the strand.
- 1        6.     The game ball of claim 5 wherein the at least one strand is formed of a strand material selected from the group consisting of a polyester, a nylon, a metal and a polymer.

1        7.     The game ball of claim 1 wherein the outer material has a modulus of  
2     elasticity of between 30 and 110 kg/cm<sup>2</sup> and a tensile strength between 450 and 600  
3     kg/cm<sup>2</sup>.

1        8.     The game ball of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the exposed  
2     surface includes a pebbled texture.

1        9.     The game ball of claim 1 wherein the outer material is selected from the  
2     group consisting of a wet process polyurethane, a dry process polyurethane, a  
3     polyvinylchloride foam, and a combination thereof.

1        10.    The game ball of claim 1 wherein the casing has a generally prolate  
2     spheroidal shape having a major longitudinal dimension and a minor transverse  
3     dimension, wherein the casing has a central portion disposed between first and second  
4     end portions, wherein the laced region is disposed on the central portion, and wherein  
5     the lacing includes at least one longitudinally extending segment and a plurality of  
6     transversely extending segments.

1        11.    The game ball of claim 10, wherein the plurality of transversely  
2     extending segments comprises eight transversely extending segments.

1        12.    The game ball of claim 2, wherein the inner substrate has a top side and  
2     a bottom side, and wherein the outer layer is attached only to the top side.

1        13.    The game ball of claim 2, wherein the inner substrate has a top side and  
2     a bottom side, and wherein the outer layer is attached only to the top side and the  
3     bottom side.

1        14.    The game ball of claim 2, wherein the outer layer substantially surrounds  
2     the inner substrate.

1        15. The game ball of claim 1, wherein the casing is substantially and  
2 primarily formed in a first color and the exposed surface of the lacing is formed in a  
3 second color, and wherein the first and second colors are substantially the same color.

1        16. The game ball of claim 1 wherein the casing is substantially and  
2 primarily formed in a first color and the exposed surface of the lacing is formed in a  
3 second color, and wherein the first and second colors are different colors.

1        17. A game ball comprising:  
2                a casing having a laced region; and  
3                a lacing coupled to the laced region of the casing, the lacing having an  
4                exposed surface, at least a portion of the exposed surface of the lacing having a.  
5                pebbled texture.

1        18. The game ball of claim 17, wherein the entire exposed surface of the  
2 lacing includes the pebbled texture.

1        19. The game ball of claim 17, wherein the lacing further comprises an inner  
2 substrate and an outer layer, wherein the outer layer includes the exposed surface, and  
3 wherein the inner substrate is formed from one or more materials selected from the  
4 group consisting of a woven cloth, a non-woven cloth, a urethane impregnated cloth, at  
5 least one nylon strand, at least one polyester strand, a metal wire, a plastic, a vinyl, a  
6 polymer, a latex, a rope, a leather strip and a combination thereof.

1        20. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the inner substrate includes at least  
2 one strand of a high tensile strength material, and a plastic attached to and generally  
3 surrounding the strand.

1        21. The game ball of claim 19 wherein the outer layer is made of an outer  
2 material selected from the group consisting of a wet process polyurethane, a dry  
3 process polyurethane, a polyvinylchloride foam, and a combination thereof.

1        22. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the casing has a generally prolate  
2 spheroidal shape having a major longitudinal dimension and a minor transverse  
3 dimension, wherein the casing has a central portion disposed between first and second  
4 end portions, wherein the laced region is disposed on the central portion, and wherein  
5 the lacing includes at least one longitudinally extending segment and a plurality of  
6 transversely extending segments.

1        23. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the casing is substantially and  
2 primarily formed in a first color and the exposed surface of the lacing is formed in a  
3 second color, and wherein the first and second colors are substantially the same color.

1        24. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the casing is substantially and  
2 primarily formed in a first color and the exposed surface of the lacing is formed in a  
3 second color, and wherein the first and second colors are different colors.

1        25. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the casing includes a plurality of lace  
2 holes and wherein the lacing is threaded to the casing through the lace holes.

1        26. The game ball of claim 17 wherein the lacing is integrally formed to the  
2 casing.

1        27. A game ball comprising:  
2            a casing having a laced region; and  
3            a lacing coupled to and generally surrounding the laced region of the  
4 casing, the lacing including an inner substrate attached to an outer layer, the outer layer  
5 of the lacing having an exposed surface made of an outer material that is compressible,  
6 resilient, and tactile.

1        28. The game ball of claim 27, wherein at least a portion of the exposed  
2 surface includes a pebbled texture.

1        29. A lacing for a sporting goods product, the lacing comprising:  
2                an inner substrate of high tensile strength material; and  
3                an outer layer coupled to the inner substrate, the outer layer being made  
4        of a material that is soft, compressible, resilient, and tactile, the material of the outer  
5        layer having a modulus of elasticity of between 14 and 170 kg/cm<sup>2</sup> and a tensile  
6        strength between 100 and 650 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>.

1        30. The lacing of claim 29, wherein the sporting goods product is selected  
2        from the group consisting of an American football, a volleyball, a soccer ball, a  
3        basketball, a rugby ball, and a baseball mitt.

1        31. The lacing of claim 29, wherein the outer layer is coupled to the inner  
2        substrate using a means selected from the group consisting of adhesive bonding,  
3        stitching, stapling, mechanical bonding, heat bonding and combinations thereof.

1        32. The lacing of claim 29, wherein the inner substrate is formed from at  
2        least one material selected from the group consisting of a woven cloth, a non-woven  
3        cloth, a urethane impregnated cloth, at least one nylon strand, at least one polyester  
4        strand, a plastic, a metal wire, a polymer, a latex, a rope, a leather strip and a  
5        combination thereof

1        33. The lacing of claim 29 wherein the inner substrate includes at least one  
2        strand of a high tensile strength material and a plastic attached to the strand.

1        34. The lacing of claim 29 wherein the material of the outer layer has a  
2        modulus of elasticity of between 30 and 110 kg/cm<sup>2</sup> and a tensile strength between 450  
3        and 600 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>.

1        35. The lacing of claim 29 wherein the outer layer has an exposed surface,  
2        and wherein at least a portion of the exposed surface is pebbled.

1       36.    The lacing of claim 29 wherein the material of the outer layer is selected  
2   from the group consisting of a wet process polyurethane, a dry process polyurethane, a  
3   polyvinylchloride foam, and a combination thereof.

1       37.    The lacing of claim 29, wherein the inner substrate has a top side and a  
2   bottom side, and wherein the outer layer is attached only to the top side.

1       38.    The lacing of claim 29, wherein the inner substrate has a top side and a  
2   bottom side, and wherein the outer layer is attached only to the top side and the bottom  
3   side.

1       39.    The lacing of claim 29, wherein the outer layer substantially surrounds  
2   the inner substrate.